

things; and whatever may be our wishes . . . or the dictates of our passions, they cannot alter the state of facts.”

Well, Mr. Speaker, the facts are that the health care reform law is working for millions of young adults all across this country. Yesterday, the Department of Health and Human Services released figures which show that 2.5 million young Americans up to age 26 are now covered because of the Affordable Care Act's provision that allows age 26 coverage for families. Private and public employers all across America now provide this benefit at a cost of only, on average, 1 percent to health care costs. This is a plan which is working.

Last week, figures came out that showed that 2.7 million seniors are now getting relief from prescription drug costs—\$1.5 billion in reduced prescriptions drug costs because the Affordable Care Act is closing the doughnut hole.

Facts are stubborn things, and the facts show that the health care reform law is helping young Americans and older Americans.

FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA

(Mr. CRAWFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Southside High School chapter of the Future Farmers of America from Batesville, Arkansas. Southside's FFA chapter, under the leadership of Mr. Chase Hilton, revitalized its animal science program 3 years ago. Since resuming the program, Southside has been a powerhouse in State and national competitions.

One hundred thirty-five students at Southside, many of whom have never been involved in livestock, are now working in the school's stockyard raising cattle, sheep, hogs, and horses. Recently, Blaine French and Trenton Tosh won honors at the Independence County Fair with Grand Champion Angus and Hereford cattle. Blaine had Grand Champion and Supreme Champion hogs, and also won Best of the Best Showmanship Award.

Trenton Tosh won Grand Champion Hereford Heifer and Grand Champion Hereford Bull at the Arkansas State Fair.

Southside's Livestock Evaluation Team, made up of Blaine French, Trenton Tosh, Jackson Mead, and Thomas Johnson, were named the Arkansas State Champions and went on to place eighth in Nationals.

More important than any medals or awards are the life lessons those students learn and are learning through State and national competitions.

I commend Southside Future Farmers of America and their instructor, Chase Hilton, for their outstanding achievements. I know they're watching now.

Congratulations. Great work.

THANKING OUR RETURNING TROOPS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Members, thank you, and to my colleagues again, let me acknowledge the wearing of the yellow ribbon in a bipartisan way to say thank you to our troops.

But I do want to thank as well, again, the Young Scholars Academy and Dr. Anella Coleman, who were so kind to make these ribbons and to learn about our appreciation for the work of our troops coming home from Iraq. Over 100,000 have come home in the last 14 months, and I'm asking our Members to go home and yellow-ribbon your offices and your community, and have signs on your marquee that say, Welcome home to the troops, a job well done.

We never want our troops to come home from any battlefield, called to serve their Nation, to a silent America. And again, as we've supported or promoted better conditions for family and troops, we were able yesterday to give them a 1.9 percent increase in salary.

Now, as we go home for the holiday season, doing our work, let us say thank you to our troops. Thank you, Members, for wearing a yellow ribbon today.

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PUT AMERICANS BACK TO WORK

(Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, it's time for President Obama and HARRY REID's do-nothing Senate to work with House Republicans to get America back to work. To date, House Republicans have passed 28 jobs bills, most recently the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act, a bill that ensures all hardworking Americans keep more of their pay, protects Social Security, ensures access to medical care for seniors, and creates jobs.

But President Obama's contempt for job creation through energy development is astonishing. Why would he stand in the way of almost 200,000 new jobs that come with the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline that has bipartisan support? President Obama says he wants to put America back to work, but, at the same time, he threatens to veto a bill that would do exactly that and take us one step closer to energy independence.

The American people can't wait any longer. I urge the Senate and the President to act on measures that will spur job creation and real economic growth.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND). Members are reminded that remarks in debate may not engage in personality toward the Senate.

PASS THE JOBS ACT

(Mr. REYES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to be here wearing this yellow ribbon to welcome home our troops from a job well done in Iraq. My thoughts go back to April of 1968 when I came back from Vietnam to a very different America, and I'm grateful that today our troops are coming back to a welcoming and thankful Nation.

In that vein, as we sit here today and think about the holiday season, the majority of us will be fortunate enough to spend this time being surrounded by family and friends; but we should never forget that, at the same time during this holiday season, there are many among us who are homeless, who are hungry, who are out of a job and simply do not know where their next meal will come from.

This should serve as an important reminder to all of us here as Members of Congress that we must work jointly in a bipartisan manner to address the critical issues of our time. It is simply unacceptable that partisan politics prevent us from working for what's best in this country.

THE ULTRALIGHT SMUGGLING PREVENTION ACT OF 2011

(Mr. FLAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, the House will soon have the opportunity to approve the Ultralight Smuggling Prevention Act of 2011. This bill will make changes for those using or planning to use ultralight aircraft in cross-border smuggling similar to those using other aircraft. It will also continue ongoing cooperation between the Department of Defense and Homeland Security that is enhancing efforts to combat illicit cross-border trafficking.

As pressure has been applied to the border, Mexican organized crime has turned to a new and innovative smuggling approach—the use of ultralight aircraft. It's a pressing concern.

A similar bill introduced by my colleague from Tucson was overwhelmingly approved by this body in the last Congress, and those provisions were included in standalone legislation that I introduced in this Congress.

I congratulate the Senate for having passed S. 1974. I appreciate cooperation on both sides of the aisle to get this important matter to the President's desk.

VACANT AND ABANDONED HOMES

(Ms. FUDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the large number of vacant and